

**Online Joint Worship for the Mid Fraser Cluster
Aldergrove, Gladwin Heights, St. Andrew's
and Trinity Memorial United Churches**

**The Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 14th, 2021**

Thank you for Connecting for Worship

Today's Leadership includes

Preacher: Preacher: The Rev. Bill Booth

Presiding: The Rev. Tim Bowman

Musician: Jacob Greenan

Song Leader: Deborah Handley

Technical Support: Jeremy Wright

People are invited to share their prayers in the chat during the worship service.

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

**Words of Welcome, Announcements from Each Congregation and
Land Acknowledgement**

Lighting the Rainbow Candles

Lighting the Christ Candle Tim

Jesus Christ spent forty days in the wilderness
in preparation for his ministry.

We find ourselves in the wilderness,
but the light of Christ is ever before us.

(the candle is lit)

The Light of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Sung Response: VU 121 - "Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery"
[General Lenten & 4th Sunday]

*Light of life beyond conceiving, mighty spirit of our Lord,
give new strength to our believing,
give us faith to live your word, give us faith to live your word.*

*Give us eyes to see you clearly, make us children of your light;
give us hearts to love more nearly as your gospel shining bright,
as your gospel shining bright.*

Call to Worship: Bill

ONE: Let us pause for reflection on our Lenten journey.

All: Let us gather:

ONE: Not to beat ourselves up, not to point fingers,
not to make a show of confession and repentance.

ALL: LET US GATHER:

ONE: To be real; to be authentically present to ourselves,
to each other, to our relationship with God.

All: Let us gather for healing.

ONE: Let us gather for worship. Let us pray.

Opening Prayer: Bill

God of the wilderness,
We have been in the wilderness a very long time.
It has been a year, and we are very tired.
We have lost freedoms.
We have lost activities that gave our lives meaning
and friends that gave us joy.
We are tired. Send your Spirit among us;
restore and renew us; lift up before us a sign of hope.
Amen.

Hymn: VU 111 - "As the Sun with Longer Journey"

*As the sun with longer journey melts the winter's snow and ice,
with its slowly growing radiance warms the seed beneath the earth,
may the sun of Christ's uprising gently bring our hearts to life.*

*Through the days of waiting, watching in the desert of our sin,
searching on the far horizon for a sign of cloud or wind,
we await the healing waters of our Saviour's victory.*

*Praise be given to the Maker of the seasons' yearly round:
to the Speaker through the Spoken in their living Breath of love
as the ever-turning seasons roll to their eternal rest.*

Time with our Children: Tim

Hymn: VU 229 - "God of the Sparrow" (vs. 3 & 6)

*God of the rainbow, God of the cross, God of the empty grave
How does the creature say Grace how does the creature say Thanks*

*God of the ages, God near at hand, God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy, How do your children say Home*

WE LISTEN FOR THE WORD

We invite the children and their leaders into breakout rooms

Scripture Readings:

Numbers 21:4-9

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food."

Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

John 3:14-21

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: "Confronting the Poison." **Bill**

Hymn: VU 611 “**Out of the Depths, O God, We Call Your Name**”

*Out of the depths, O God, we call to you.
Wounds of the past remain, affecting all we do.
Facing our lives, we need your love so much.
Here in this community, heal us by your touch.*

*Out of the depths of fear, O God, we speak.
Breaking the silences, the searing truth we seek.
Safe among friends, our grief and rage we share.
Here in this community, hold us in your care.*

*God of the loving heart, we praise your name.
Dance through our lives and loves; anoint with Spirit flame.
Your light illumines each familiar face.
Here in this community, meet us with your grace.*

Prayer of Confession: **Tim**

ONE: Holy One: Why would lifting up a bronze serpent bring healing?

ALL: It is foolishness.

ONE: Why would lifting up a crucified man bring eternal life?

ALL: It is foolishness.

ONE: Why would we follow him? Why would we bring our failures into the open and confess them? Why would we admit our flaws, and thereby invite condemnation?

ALL: Surely it is foolishness.

ONE: We fail to see the wisdom in your Way, O God, and so we hide.

Silent prayer

Assurance: **Tim**

ONE: God did not send Jesus into the world to condemn the world, but to save it. Jesus does not condemn our sins for all time but redeems them.

We need not hide ourselves in the shadows any longer.

ALL: Thanks be to God! Amen

Hymn: MV 161 - "I Have Called You by Your Name," (V 1)

*I have called you by your name, you are mine;
I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.
I will not abandon you; all my promises are true.
You are gifted, called and chosen; you are mine.*

WE RESPOND IN LOVE AND ACTION

Prayers of the People and all the World: Tim

Prayers shared from the Chat: Tim

Holy God, you hear our words; you hear our hearts. We are known and heard deeply, graciously, constantly. Confident in this grace, we speak together the words that Jesus taught us...

The Lord's Prayer [Spoken]

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Acknowledging Our Gifts for the Work of God & Prayer of Dedication: Bill

We bring our offerings for God's work among us in many ways:
cash and cheques mailed or dropped off;
Pre-Authorized Remittance and our online donations:
our time and our work, for God's work among us.

Doxology: VU 538 - "For the Gift of Creation"

*For the gift of creation, the gift of your love, and the gift of the Spirit by which we live,
we thank you and give you the fruit of our hands.
May your grace be proclaimed by the gifts that we give.*

Prayer of Dedication: Bill

As Jesus offered himself for baptism, so we offer ourselves.
As your Spirit settled on Jesus, settle upon these gifts.

Use them; use us; call us to your Way, to the Cross and beyond.

Hymn: VU 303 - "For the Beauty of Prairies"

*For beauty of prairies, for grandeur of trees,
For flowers of woodlands, for creatures of seas,
For all you created and gave us to share We praise you,
Creator, extolling your care.*

*As steward of beauty received at your hand
As creatures who hear your most urgent command,
We turn from our wasteful destruction of life.
Confessing our failures, confessing our strife.*

*Teach us once again to be gardeners in peace.
All nature around us is ours but on lease.
Your name we would hallow in all that we do, Fulfilling our calling, creating with you.*

Blessing and Sending Forth: Bill

Sung Response: VU 318 - "Christ Be With Me"

*Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me.*

*Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.*

Postlude

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